

UNIT 1: multi-genre project (personal writing)

The purpose of this unit is to help you understand and learn to write purposefully, meaningfully, and successfully using ONLY your personal experiences and opinions or beliefs for content and support. During this unit, you will learn about and practice the skills and concepts associated with different contexts, styles, and genres of writing; in other words, you will learn how to appropriately adjust your writing to suit different writing situations and specific audiences as well as learn how to use tone, voice, point of view, diction, and structures to create effective texts of various kinds. The ability to appropriately and effectively write in many genres is essential to producing successful writing in your academic courses and later on in the work world.

Basically, what you will do during this unit is write several different types of texts ranging from informal/conversational texts like an email to a friend to formal, academic texts like an essay. You will have many different genres to choose from: some are required and some are up to you. In the end, your final product (portfolio) will not be a single paper but rather a collection of several pieces of writing that, when combined, will communicate a single, unified message to readers. Think about this project like it is a collage: just as an artist uses many different images and media to create a unified image that communicates one dominant idea, you will create collage of written texts that—when put together strategically—make one overall statement. I know this sounds hard, and in some ways it is; however, the writing you will do for this project can also be a lot of fun if you approach it by choosing a topic you're interested in and that matters to you, experiment with unfamiliar genres, keep an open mind, and invest honest and serious effort in your writing.

The most important thing you need to understand is that this project should include personal writing only—writing that comes only from your own mind, memories, and experiences. You are absolutely forbidden to use any outside information, sources, or research *in your writing* for this project; in other words, you are NOT allowed to use any information that isn't already inside your brain. You may consult outside sources (Internet, other people, news sources) for brainstorming purposes ONLY. In the writing you do for this project, there should NOT be any information from any source of any kind in your writing, including the Internet, books, articles, videos, newspapers, magazines, and other sources.

Selecting a Topic & Writing Your Initial Topic Proposal

STEP ONE: CHOOSE A TOPIC & THEME

Your first task is to choose a topic and theme for your entire project—your topic is *the general subject* you will write about and the theme is *the overall message or main point* you want to make, which will be communicated and developed more and more with each genre you include in your project. You will be writing several papers (genres) that vary in regard to type, length, style, and audience; these genres must be connected clearly by a common theme, which is the overall message/main point you want to share with readers. Each paper (genre) you write should convey or reveal something new and different about your topic and help to further develop the message/point of the overall project. You are pretty much free to choose anything you want as a topic and theme. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE devote a good amount of time, effort, and energy into choosing a topic and deciding on a theme. Choose something that is important and interesting to you and something that you care deeply about; also, choose something you want to explore more, and feel is important or worthwhile to share with others (readers), and won't get bored writing about for half a semester. You will want to narrow your topic down appropriately so that it is something you will be able to write about in a relatively complete, comprehensive manner within the limitations of the project. Once we get started on writing genres, you may not change your topic and theme, so choose carefully and wisely. This is absolutely crucial to creating a successful multi-genre project.

STEP TWO:

Write your initial topic proposal (instructions were given in class).

STEP THREE:

Write your revised topic proposal (instructions are on a separate handout)

Genre Choices

Choose FIVE genres in total. Below is a list of the required and optional genres. If you think of a genre that is not on this list, please discuss it with me to get approval.

GENRE LIST NUMBER ONE—BOTH are required

Descriptive Paragraph

Expository Paragraph

GENRE LIST NUMBER TWO—choose ONE kind of essay

Personal Essay OR Opinion Essay

GENRE LIST NUMBER THREE—choose ONE from this list

Extended Photo Caption (3-paragraph essay)

Short Story (3-paragraphs)

Fairy Tale

Legend

Letter to the Editor

Biography

Speech

Memoir

GENRE LIST NUMBER FOUR—choose ONE from this list

Email

Advertisement/Sign/Flyer

Radio Announcement

Dedication

Obituary or Eulogy

Dialogue (conversation)

Diary Entry

How-to Instructions

Organization of Multi-Genre Project:

1. Title page that includes an image/visual of some kind with a brief caption
2. Prologue (Introduction Paragraph)
3. Genres – five genres organized the way you think is best for the message you want to communicate
4. Epilogue (Conclusion Paragraph)